

Correspondence

Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be typed double spaced (including the references) and be signed by all authors

TO THE EDITOR, *Genitourinary Medicine*

Fewer *Trichomonas vaginalis* organisms in vaginas of infected women during menstruation

Sir,
A recent paper by Demeš *et al* reports lower counts of *Trichomonas vaginalis* organisms in the vagina during menstruation.¹ The authors considered that this was caused by immunological factors within menstrual blood. Other explanations for this result could also be given. The menstrual flow may "flush out" the vagina and thus decrease the number of organisms present. No mention was made of the use of tampons, which absorb vaginal secretions and organisms. Constituents of tampons may alter vaginal microbiology. Finally, the raised vaginal pH during menstruation may also be a factor.

Yours faithfully,

D M Coker

I Ahmed-Jushuf

Department of Genitourinary Medicine,
Royal Liverpool Hospital,
Prescot Street,
Liverpool L7 8XP

Reference

- 1 Demeš P, Gombošová A, Valent M, Fabušová H, Jánoška A. Fewer *Trichomonas vaginalis* organisms in vaginas of infected women during menstruation. *Genitourin Med* 1988;64:22-4.

TO THE EDITOR, *Genitourinary Medicine*

Fewer *Trichomonas vaginalis* organisms in vaginas of infected women during menstruation

Sir,
My colleagues and I agree with Drs Coker and Ahmed-Jushuf that menstruation is a complex process with multifactorial changes in vaginal environment, but if we considered that menstrual blood would only mechanically "flush out" vaginal micro-organisms all women would have decreased numbers of trichomonads and also bacteria during bleeding, which is not the case. In some patients no change or even increase in microbial counts was recorded during menstruation (see our results and pertinent references).

Our data about the concentrations of complement in menstrual blood and the susceptibility of *T vaginalis* to complement mediated lysis offer one explanation for these in vivo observations.¹

The women in our study did not use intravaginal tampons during menstruation, which should have been mentioned in our paper.

Yours faithfully,

Pavol Demeš

Department of Pathology,
Immunology Laboratories,
Cancer Center/Clinical Building,
College of Medicine,
University of South Alabama,
Mobile, Alabama 36688, USA

Reference

- 1 Demeš P, Gombošová A, Valent M, Jánoška A, Fabušová H, Petrenko M. Differential susceptibility of fresh *Trichomonas vaginalis* isolates to complement in menstrual blood and cervical mucus. *Genitourin Med* 1988;64:176-9.

TO THE EDITOR, *Genitourinary Medicine*

Fewer *Trichomonas vaginalis* organisms in vaginas of infected women during menstruation

Sir,

The following case report confirms the findings of Demeš *et al* (*Genitourin Med* 1988;64:22-4) and illustrates another aspect of *Trichomonas vaginalis* infection in relation to the menstrual cycle.

In 1976 a multiparous patient aged 34, who attended for an intrauterine contraceptive device check because she had irregular bleeding, was found to have trichomoniasis.¹ As the only possible source of infection was her husband, who was currently away working as a long distance lorry driver, it was thought advisable to wait for his return to treat both simultaneously. The opportunity thus presented itself to test her daily for *T vaginalis*.

On immediate microscopy, flagellates were plentiful for three successive days until three days before her expected menses, when there was a sudden drop in their number.

None could be seen on the day before she started to bleed. On day 1 only one motile trichomonad was observed, on day 2 there were several, and on day 3 their number approximated to that seen at first examination.

It has been stated that the most suitable time to search for *T vaginalis* is soon after menstruation,² and the above confirmatory finding raises the possibility of false negative results and inaccuracy in trichomonas statistics.

Yours faithfully,

Harold Fox

67 Alder Lodge, River Gardens,
73 Stevenage Road, Fulham,
London SW6 6NR

References

- 1 Fox H. *Studies in lower genito-urinary medicine in a general practice*. London: London University, 1981:170. MD Thesis.
- 2 King AJ, Mascall WN, Price INO. *Trichomonas vaginalis* - its incidence and co-existence with gonococcal infections. *Lancet* 1936;ii:18-20.

TO THE EDITOR, *Genitourinary Medicine*

Cryotherapy compared with trichloroacetic acid in treating genital warts

Sir,

I am disappointed that details of the concentration of trichloroacetic acid used by Godley *et al* (*Genitourin Med* 1987;63:390-2) to treat genital warts were omitted. Surely, we should expect more basic information when two treatment regimens are being compared?

Yours faithfully,

R S Pattman

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Westgate Road,
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TO THE EDITOR, *Genitourinary Medicine*

Cryotherapy compared with trichloroacetic acid in treating genital warts

Sir,

We are grateful to Dr Pattman for pointing out one more of the many practical problems